

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 TRSE-00 ARA-10
EA-10 NEA-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00
ICAE-00 INRE-00 /109 W
-----096607 131425Z /72

O R 131333Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7278
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 965

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: WA, SF, PORG
SUBJ: NAMIBIA: NEXT STEPS

REFS: (A) CAPE TOWN 961, (B) USUN 1946

1. IN LIGHT OF REF B, WE WOULD LIKE TO ENLARGE ON REF A
WHICH CONTAINED OUR OBSERVATIONS ON CURRENT SITUATION AND
RECOMMENDATIONS.

2. BELIEVE THE FOCUS IN OUR APPROACHES TO SOUTH AFRICA
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SHOULD NOW BE ON WHERE WE FIND OURSELVES AND ON WHAT
MUST BE DONE ABOUT IT. WE SHOULD NOW LEAVE ASIDE TO THE
EXTENT POSSIBLE FURTHER CASTIGATION OF THE
SOUTH AFRICANS FOR THEIR ACTION. WE HAVE SEEN HOW EVEN HODDING
CARTER'S RELATIVELY MILD CHARACTERIZATION OF THE ANGOLA RAID AS
"UNFORTUNATE" AROUSED PIK BOTHA'S EMOTIONS AND PUT HIM IN LEAGUE
WITH P.W. BOTHA IN A COMMON UNHELPFUL HARDLINE RESPONSE.

3. THE FUNDAMENTAL POINT TO GET ACROSS TO THE SOUTH AFRICANS IMMEDIATELY IS THAT, WHATEVER MAY BE OUR DIFFERENCES OVER THE RAID AND SOUTH AFRICAN CONCERNS ABOUT OUR REACTION TO IT, WE ARE CONFRONTED WITH THE INESCAPABLE REALITY OF THE CONSEQUENCES: SWAPO IS NO LONGER ON THE DEFENSIVE NOR UNDER AFRICAN PRESSURE TO MOVE, AND THUS THERE WILL NOW BE A DELAY WHICH NEITHER OF US WANTS AND THE DURATION OF WHICH WE CANNOT AT THIS TIME CALCULATE.

4. WE WILL HAVE TO MAKE UNMISTAKEABLY CLEAR THAT DRAMATIC AND CONVINCING MOVES BY SOUTH AFRICA ARE PREREQUISITES FOR ANY SUCCESSFUL EFFORT ON OUR PART WITH THE AFRICAN STATES. ALTHOUGH IT IS DEBATABLE WHETHER WE SHOULD SPECIFICALLY CITE THE MOVES WE HAVE IN MIND, THEY WOULD INCLUDE THE RELEASE OF ALL SWAPO DETAINEES AND THE OTHER POSITIVE STEPS CITED IN USUN 1946. IN ANY EVENT, WE SHOULD DIRECTLY SEEK THEIR AGREEMENT TO SOME CONCESSIONS DEALING WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSAL SUCH AS SAG ACCEPTANCE OF AN UNDERSTANDING THAT IT WOULD NOT EMPLOY THE OPTION OF STATIONING PART OF ITS RESIDUAL FORCES AT OSHIVELLO (REF A). THE SAG SHOULD BE UNDER NO ILLUSION: FAILURE TO MOVE PROMPTLY IN THIS DIRECTION WILL PROBABLY MEAN PROLONGED DELAY OF THE WESTERN INITIATIVE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ESCALATING CYCLE OF VIOLENCE IN WHICH SOUTH AFRICA WOULD

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BEAR THE ONUS IN THE EYES OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY.

5. WE LIKE THE IDEA OF GETTING INFORMALLY TO VORSTER HIMSELF, BUT IT IS DIFFICULT TO CONCEIVE OF A "CASUAL" EVENING WITH HIM. DO NOT THINK ANY OF THE CAPE TOWN FIVE HAVE THAT KIND OF RAPPORT WITH HIM. THOUGH IT WOULD NOT MAKE FOR A CASUAL EXCHANGE, THE QUIET APPEARANCE HERE OF A PRESIDENTIAL EMISSARY (NOT NECESSARILY SOMEONE CURRENTLY IN THE ADMINISTRATION) FOR AN INFORMAL TALK WITH VORSTER MIGHT BE A FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVE.

6. DOUBT WE COULD MAKE MUCH HEADWAY WITH CABINET HARDLINERS. THE PRINCIPAL TARGET, OF COURSE, WOULD BE P.W. BOTHA. HE IS A MAN OF NARROW VISION, NOT PARTICULARLY RATIONAL, AND HIS STANCE IS BOUND UP WITH THE SUCCESSION STRUGGLE. (THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT PIK BOTHA IS NOT SUBJECT IN SOME MEASURE TO SIMILAR INFIRMITIES, BUT HE IS AT LEAST POINTED IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION AS FAR AS THE WESTERN PROPOSAL IS CONCERNED.) GOING TO P.W. AND THE OTHER HARDLINERS COULD WELL BE DISTURBING TO PIK. ENCOURAGING CABINET COLLEAGUES LIKE KOORNHOF WHO GO ALONG WITH PIK WOULD, HOWEVER, BE ANOTHER MATTER.

7. IN "GOING OVER THE HEADS OF THE SAG", WE ARE CONFRONTED WITH THE COMMON PERCEPTION AMONG THE WHITE POPULATION HERE THAT, WHILE THERE WERE POLITICAL RISKS AND THE TIMING MAY HAVE BEEN INOPPORTUNE, SOMETHING HAD TO BE DONE. THIS VIEW WAS EXPRESSED TODAY, MAY 13, BY PFP SPOKESMAN HARRY SCHWARTZ (CAPE TOWN 963). CONSEQUENTLY, WHILE REMINDING THE SOUTH AFRICANS THAT THEY ARE NOT CONSIDERED EITHER A SOVIEREIGN OR LEGITIMATE POWER IN SWA/NAMIBIA, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL HERE IF WE COULD FURTHER UNDERSCORE OUR CONCERN THAT BOTH SIDES AVOID VIOLENCE. SUGGEST IT WOULD NOT BE OUT OF PLACE FOR THE FIVE -- AND PARTICULARLY THE US -- TO EXPRESS PUBLICLY OUR CONCERN ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF A SPIRALING CYCLE OF VIOLENCE AND THE CONSEQUENT NEED FOR THE UTMOST RESTRAINT AT THIS JUNCTURE BY BOTH SWAPO AND SOUTH AFRICA. IF SUCH STATEMENTS WERE COUPLED WITH POSITIVE
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SOUTH AFRICAN MEASURES, IT COULD CONCEIVABLY HAVE A USEFUL EFFECT NOT ONLY HERE BUT ELSEWHERE AS WELL.
NELSON

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